

1 (Currently amended). Retainer apparatus for holding conduits in a trench having a bottom and a pair of sides comprising in combination:

a center bridge portion to be disposed against the conduits in the trench [[, and]]

;

a pair of end plates secured to the center bridge portion and disposed against the sides of the trench [[.]]; and

a boss on each end plate extending outwardly from the end plates for receiving the bridge.

2 (Original). The apparatus of claim 1 in which the end plates include means for securing the end plates to the sides of the trench.

3 (original). The apparatus of claim 2 in which the means for securing the end plates to the sides of the trench include barbs extending outwardly and upwardly from the end plates.

4 (Original). The apparatus of claim 3 in which the barbs are in the configuration of louvers.

5 (Original). The apparatus of claim 4 in which the barbs are disposed generally parallel to each other.

6 (Cancel). The apparatus of claim 3 in which the barbs are generally conically configured.

7 (Original). The apparatus of claim 1 in which the end plates are generally of a rectangular configuration.

8 (Original). The apparatus of claim 1 in which the end plates include apertures.

9 (Currently amended). The apparatus of claim ~~[[9]]~~ 8 which includes spikes extending through the apertures for anchoring the end plates in non-cohesive soil.

10 (Original). The apparatus of claim 1 in which the center bridge portion comprises a single member.

11 (Original). The apparatus of claim 10 in which the center bridge portion has a generally circular cross section.

[[10]] 12 (Currently amended and canceled). The apparatus of claim 1 in which the center bridge portion includes telescoping members.

[[11]] 13 (Currently amended and canceled). The apparatus of claim 1 in which the end plates include locking elements, and the center bridge portion includes recesses for receiving the locking element for securing the center bridge portion to the end plates.

[[12]] 14 (Currently amended and canceled). The apparatus of claim 1 in which the end plates include sockets, and the center bridge portion includes ends extending into the sockets for securing the center bridge portion to the end plates.

[[13]] 15 (Currently amended and canceled). The apparatus of claim 1 which further includes means for securing the conduits to the center bridge portion.

[[14]] 16 (Currently amended and canceled). The apparatus of claim 15 in which the means for securing the conduits to the center bridge portion includes tie elements.

[[15]] 17 (Currently amended and canceled). The apparatus of claim 15 in which the means for securing the conduits to the center bridge portion includes a conduit form means, and the conduits are disposed on the conduit form means.

[[16]] 18 (Currently amended and canceled). The apparatus of claim 17 which further includes another retainer apparatus having a pair of end plates and a center bridge portion extending between the pair of end plates, and the conduit form means is disposed on the center portion of the other retainer apparatus.

[[17]] 19 (Currently amended and canceled). The apparatus of claim 17 in which the conduit form means includes

a pair of sides, and

a top secured to the pair of sides and disposed on the center bridge portion.

[[18]] 20 (Currently amended and canceled). The apparatus of claim 19 in which the conduit form means further includes scallops on the top for receiving the conduits.

[[19]] 21 (Currently amended and canceled). The apparatus of claim 19 in which the conduit form means further includes vee grooves on the top for receiving the conduits.

[[20]] 22 (Currently amended and canceled). Apparatus for retaining conduits in a trench having a bottom and a pair of sides comprising in combination:

a first bridge assembly including

a first pair of end plates disposed against the sides of the trench,

first means for securing the pair of end plates to the sides of the trench, and

first center bridge means secured to the first pair of end plates and the conduits are disposed against the first center bridge means.

[[21]] 23 (Currently amended and canceled). The apparatus of claim 22 in which the means for securing the first pair of end plates to the sides of the trench include barb tabs on the end plates.

[[22]] 24 (Currently amended and canceled). The apparatus of claim 22 in which the means for securing the first pair of end plates to the sides of the trench includes spikes extending through the end plates and into the sides of the trench.

[[23]] 25 (Currently amended and canceled). The apparatus of claim 22 in which the first center bridge means includes telescoping elements.

[[24] 26 (Currently amended and canceled). The apparatus of claim 22 in which the first center bridge means includes a first center bridge and straps for securing the conduits to the first center bridge.

[[25]] 27 (Currently amended and canceled). The apparatus of claim 22 in which the first center bridge means further includes a first center bridge and a conduit form means disposed on the first center bridge, and the conduits are disposed on the conduit form means.

[[26]] 28 (Currently amended and canceled). The apparatus of claim 27 in which the conduit form means includes a pair of sides and a top secured to the pair of sides.

[[27]] 29 (Currently amended and canceled). The apparatus of claim 28 in which the conduit form means further includes scallops on the top, and the conduits are disposed in the scallops.

[[28]] 30 (Currently amended and canceled). The apparatus of claim 28 in which the conduit form means further includes vee grooves on the top, and the conduits are disposed in the scallops.

[[29]] 31 (Currently amended and canceled). The apparatus of claim 27 which further includes a second bridge assembly, including

a second pair of end plates disposed against the sides of the trench,

second means for securing the end plates to the sides of the trench, and

second bridge means secured to the second pair of end plates and disposed on the conduits.

32 (New). End plate apparatus to be secured to a wall of a trench for retaining at least a single conduit in the trench comprising in combination:

an end plate;

a boss extending outwardly from the end plate and adapted to receive a bridge element to be disposed on at least the single conduit disposed in the trench; and

means for securing the end plate to the wall of the trench.

33 (New). The apparatus of claim 32 in which the means for securing the end plate to the wall of the trench includes at least a single aperture extending through the end plate.

34 (New). The apparatus of claim 33 in which the means for securing the end plate to the wall of the trench further includes a nail extending through the aperture.

35 (New). The apparatus of claim 32 in which the means for securing the end plate to the wall of the trench includes at least a single barb element extending outwardly from the end plate opposite to the boss and adapted to extend into the wall of the trench.

36 (New). The apparatus of claim 35 in which the barb element is in the configuration of a louver.